



Peter Henderson Bryce, M.D.

Award for Children and Youth

Advocating for the Health and Well-Being
of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Children and Youth

Peter Henderson Bryce, Medical Doctor (M.D.), 1853–1932

Award Summary and Criteria

Who Was Peter Henderson Bryce?

Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce was born in Mount Pleasant Ontario in 1853 and graduated from the University of Toronto in 1876 when Canada was only nine years old. He went on to receive a medical degree and become an expert on tuberculosis. He served as President of the American Health Association, founder of the Canadian Public Health Association, and Ontario's first Secretary of Health (1882–1904) before accepting a post as Chief Medical Officer at the Indian Department in 1904.

Bryce wrote many articles on public health and served as founder and member of numerous professional organizations. In 1907, Bryce inspected 35 residential schools in three prairie provinces. He found that 24 percent of the children in these residential schools had died of preventable diseases like tuberculosis. At Fire Hills Residential School, over 75 percent of the children had died. Bryce said, “medical science knows just what to do” to stop the children from dying and he sent many recommendations to the government to improve the health conditions in the schools. The Government of Canada ignored his calls for action and children continued to die, prompting Bryce to continue to speak out by publishing articles in the *Ottawa Citizen* newspaper, *Saturday Night Magazine* and a book called *The Story of a National Crime: An appeal for Justice to the Indians of Canada*. Bryce also called on his colleagues to join him in pressuring the government including S.H. Blake, a leading human rights lawyer of the time, who wrote that “if Canada fails to obviate the preventable causes of death [to the children in residential schools] it brings itself into unpleasant nearness to manslaughter.” Bryce continued his advocacy until he died in 1932.

The Government of Canada failed to make the changes Bryce recommended, pushed him out of government and tried to undermine his arguments. Despite the personal risk and sacrifices, Bryce never gave up. He was a man of moral courage who acted on his values and responsibilities as a health professional to support First Nations children at a time when many others were silent. His efforts to save the lives of children in the residential schools was acknowledged by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in its final report.

Other Ways P.H. Bryce Made a Difference

Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce was very active in his community. Many of the organizations he founded or participated in continue to play an active role in supporting health and wellness today. For example, Bryce served in the following capacities:

- The Canadian Public Health Association (founder)
- American Public Health Association (served as president and honorary fellow)
- The American Journal of Public Health (contributor)
- Canadian Medical Association, Public Health Section (chairman)
- Canadian Historical Association (founder)
- Ontario Department of Health (founder)
- Upper Canada College (alumni)
- University of Toronto (alumni)
- Arts and Letters Club of Ottawa (served as president)

The University of Toronto and Dr. Michael Dan recognized Dr. Bryce's courageous and principled commitment to public health in 2015 by opening the Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health.

The Award

This award will be given every two years to recognize children and youth who individually or in groups advocate for the safety, health or well-being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth. Although the group might be working to help one child or one community, it is important to show how these efforts could help other First Nations, Métis and Inuit children.

Award nominees must show how they overcame challenges to stand up for the rights of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children that are described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf). Examples of overcoming a challenge might be speaking in public about the rights of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children even though you are a bit scared of talking in front of groups or speaking up when First Nations, Métis or Inuit people are being discriminated against (watch Letters to Canada to learn what discrimination is at www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPHUHYq8A8)

Proposed Benefit of the Award

Dr. Bryce stood up for First Nations, Métis and Inuit children even when it was a hard thing to do because other people criticized him. He knew what was right and in a peaceful and respectful way kept standing with First Nations children. We want others to follow his example by having the courage to stand up for the right thing and help this generation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth have the same chance to succeed as other children and youth in Canada.

Award Criteria

- There are three age categories with recipients for each category: the recipient of the children's prize must be a child or a group of children under the age of 12; the recipient of the youth prize must be a youth or a youth group between 13 and 18 years old; and the children and youth group prize is open to young people under 18 years old.
- The nominee(s) actively stand(s) up for the health and well-being of Métis, Inuit or First Nations children and youth in Canada in peaceful and respectful ways.
- The nomination shows how the efforts can help First Nations, Métis and Inuit children beyond the specific group the nominee(s) is/are working with.
- The nominee or group of nominees has overcome personal or collective challenges and risks to stand with First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth.
- The nominee(s) inspire(s) others to learn, care and take action to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth.
- The nominee(s)' work support(s) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Nomination Process

To nominate a child, youth, or group of child and youth for this award, you will need to complete the Peter Henderson Bryce Award nomination form. You will also need to send a letter telling us why the child, youth or child and youth group you are nominating deserve the award and get at least two other people to send letters or YouTube videos doing the same. You can also submit any other materials (written work, videos, pictures, etc.) that show the work that the young person or group has done to support First Nations, Inuit, and Métis health, safety, and wellbeing.

The complete nomination package (nomination form, cover letter and at least two letters/ videos of support) must be received no later than **11:45 PM EST on July 31, 2022**.

The complete nomination package can be submitted via mail (to the below address), through our website (fncaringsociety.com/awards/phb/nominate) or by email (to info@fncaringsociety.com).

Peter Henderson Bryce Award Committee,
c/o First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada
Suite 202, 350 Sparks Street, Ottawa, ON K1R 7S8

For more information please contact Madelaine McCracken, Education and Public Engagement Coordinator at mmccracken@fncaringsociety.com

Please note that incomplete nomination packages will not be considered.



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Nomination Form

Please indicate the age group of the award nominee(s) (select one)

- Child or group of children (aged 0–12)
- Youth or group of youth (age 13–18)
- Children and youth group (mixed age group)

Award Nominee Information

NOMINEE(S) NAME(S) OR GROUP NAME _____ CONTACT PERSON FOR THE NOMINEE(S)/GROUP _____

AFFILIATION – SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION/GROUP _____

SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION/GROUP _____

STREET ADDRESS 1 _____

STREET ADDRESS 2 _____ CITY _____ PROV/TERR _____ POSTAL CODE _____

WORK PHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Award Nominator Information

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS 1 _____

STREET ADDRESS 2 _____ CITY _____ PROV/TERR _____ POSTAL CODE _____

WORK PHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN THE NOMINEE(S)?

HOW DO YOU KNOW OF THE NOMINEE(S)' ADVOCACY FOR THE SAFETY, HEALTH OR WELLBEING OF FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT CHILDREN AND YOUTH?



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Nomination Form *(continued)*

Award Nomination Package Checklist

The following documents are included in the award nomination package:

Complete nomination form

Cover letter explaining how the nominee meets the award criteria

2 letters of support

Other materials that might support the nomination (links to video clips, pictures, etc).

The deadline for nominations is July 31, 2022 at 11:45 ET

Please note that incomplete nomination packages will not be considered.

For questions please contact
Madelaine McCracken at mmccracken@fncaringsociety.com